

36. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 35 wherein said mechanical fastener is a hook-and-loop type mechanical fastener which comprises a hook material which includes a base sheet and stemlike projections extending from said base sheet, said stemlike projections of said mechanical fastener being releasably engaged with said disposable absorbent article to protect said hook material before said disposable absorbent article is handled by a user.

37. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 35 wherein each of said disposable absorbent articles further includes at least one ear tab which is attached to said disposable absorbent article and wherein said base sheet of said hook material is attached to said at least one ear tab.

38. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 37 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said at least one ear tab.

39. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 37 wherein said at least one ear tab is an elastic material.

40. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 37 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said bodyside liner of said disposable absorbent article.

41. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 36 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said bodyside liner of said disposable absorbent article.

42. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 36 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said outer cover of said disposable absorbent article.

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43. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 36 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said disposable absorbent article to provide a peel strength of at least about 20 grams.

44. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 36 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said disposable absorbent article to provide a peel strength of from about 30 to about 90 grams.

45. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 36 wherein said disposable absorbent article further includes at least one loop material which is joined to said disposable absorbent article and wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said loop material.

46. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 45 wherein said loop material includes a nonwoven material.

47. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 36 wherein said stemlike projections and a portion of said disposable absorbent article are releasably engaged by passing between a pair of rotatable nip rolls.

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48. A package of disposable absorbent articles comprising a plurality of said disposable absorbent articles wherein each of said disposable absorbent articles includes an outer cover, a bodyside liner, an absorbent core disposed between said outer cover and said bodyside liner, and at least one hook-and-loop type mechanical fastener which comprises a hook material which includes a base sheet and stemlike projections extending from said base sheet, said stemlike projections being releasably engaged with said disposable absorbent article to protect said hook material and provide a pant-like structure before said disposable absorbent article is handled by a user.

49. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 48 wherein each of said disposable absorbent articles further includes at least one ear tab which is attached to said disposable absorbent article and wherein said base sheet of said hook material is attached to said at least one ear tab.

50. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 48 wherein said mechanical fastener further comprises a loop material which is attached to said disposable absorbent article and wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said loop material to protect said stemlike projections and provide said pant-like structure.

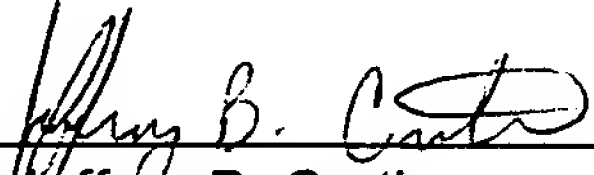
51. The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim 48 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said outer cover of said disposable absorbent article.

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Respectfully submitted,

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